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SUBJECT: LIBERIA SANCTIONS: COUNCIL CONSIDERS EXPERT
RECOMMENDATIONS

¶1. SUMMARY: On June 25, Uganda Perm Rep, reporting on behalf of chair of the Liberia Sanctions Committee ("1521 Committee") briefed the Committee on the Panel of Expert's (POE) midterm report. Ambassador DiCarlo thanked the POE for recommendations on strengthening the efficacy of the sanctions regime, stated that the United States is exploring ways to assist the Government of Liberia (GOL) in fulfilling its obligations to implement the measures, and noted the POE's concern that the GOL must better manage and administer natural resources controls, particularly diamonds. Council members were positive about the work of the POE but raised concerns over Liberia's management of the timber and diamond industries and its failure to implement assets freeze. END SUMMARY.

¶2. On June 25, Uganda Perm Rep Rugunda, vice chair of the Liberia Sanctions Committee ("1521 Committee"), briefed the UN Security Council on the POE's midterm report (NOTE: Committee Chair, Libya Perm Rep Shalgham, was not in New York). His summary of the POE report included: 1) Liberia's decreased attention to compliance with the Kimberly Process (KP); 2) the impact of the global economic crisis on Liberia's diamond industry; 3) the slow pace and low revenues of Liberia's development of timber concessions (NOTE: Three years have passed since the timber sanctions ban was lifted and Liberia has not exported any legally harvested timber. END NOTE); 4) Liberia's failure to implement assets freeze against listed individuals; and 5) the UN Mission in Liberia's (UNMIL) key role in monitoring the arms embargo.

¶3. Ambassador DiCarlo thanked the POE for recommendations on how to strengthen the Liberia sanctions regime and make the committee more efficient. She relayed to the Council that the United States is exploring ways to be responsive to President Johnson Sirleaf's request for assistance to help the GOL increase its ability to implement its asset freeze obligations. DiCarlo commended UNMIL for its role in helping the GOL re-establish proper administration and control over natural resources. She also underscored the recommendation that the GOL strengthen internal controls on diamond mining and trading and urged the GOL to enhance regional KP collaboration.

¶4. UK Perm Rep Sawers was encouraged by the committee's recent work in delisting individuals. He expressed concern, however, over POE reports that listed individuals have continuing contacts with Charles Taylor, warning that the "Taylorites" remain a risk to Liberia's security.

¶5. French Perm Rep Ripert strongly urged Liberia to implement asset freeze obligations calling Liberia's lack of

implementation a matter of will and not legislation. He cautioned that Liberia's unwillingness to comply sets a "disastrous" precedent and undermines the Security Council's ability to enforce sanctions in other African regimes. He also stated that Liberia's inability to benefit from the lifting of timber and diamond bans points to a "governance problem."

¶6. Burkina Faso Perm Rep Kafando expressed satisfaction with Liberia's progress and urged that UNMIL continue its key role in monitoring the borders and diamond controls. He stressed that Liberia must continue to implement sanctions and asked Liberia to "redouble its efforts." Kafando noted the positive report on arms embargo compliance despite the challenge of porous borders. Vietnam stated that Liberia sanctions should be reviewed to ensure that measures are not undermining national reconciliation and reintegration nor hurting the people of Liberia.

¶7. On natural resource administration, Burkina Faso, Costa Rica, China and Mexico urged the GOL to develop Liberia's natural resource industries so that these industries may benefit the local economy and contribute to Liberia's economic development. In particular, Burkina Faso stressed the need to implement strict forestry laws and procedures with regards to export contracts. China stressed Liberia's obligation to comply fully with the POE in all fields, including management of natural resources. Burkina Faso and Costa Rica also welcomed the POE's cooperation with Interpol and other UN bodies.

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